

I hope you will help us do this. If we train enough people to spot the problems early and work on them aggressively, the EEOC can help give us more stories like Sharon Long's, without the waiting time.

Second, another important way to close the wage gap is to open new opportunities. So we propose a \$17 million investment in the Department of Labor, to include resources to expand opportunities for women in nontraditional jobs. We're making headway in the construction industry. We're also going to put a special focus on the jobs of the future in the high-tech industry. Today—listen to this—men outnumber women by more than two to one in many high-tech occupations. These are among the highest paid jobs in our economy, paying on average almost 80 percent above the average jobs. Now, that's another element of the digital divide. We need to close the divide in employment and expand opportunities for women in these kinds of jobs.

Third, and finally, we need to clearly send the message that wage discrimination against women is just as unacceptable as discrimination based on race or ethnicity. So once again I ask the Congress to pass the "Paycheck Fairness Act" sponsored by Representative DeLauro and Senator Tom Daschle. Pass it. It's a good bill. There is no excuse not to pass it. We plainly need to strengthen the law. We've had the other Equal Pay Act on the books since 1963, and we've still got a 25 percent gap. The evidence is there. We should have been able to eliminate this problem after 37 years, and we have to do more.

Again, I say—and I thank, particularly, Representative Morella for being here—this is not a Democratic or a Republican issue; it's a family

issue, and it's an American issue. It's about what kind of country we want our children to grow up in. I am delighted that these young women in the soccer team have come here as a team. And it must be a great thrill for them to see Michelle Akers, and I hope it spurs them to greater achievement in athletics and in academics. Most of them won't be professional soccer players. Most of them will be in the work force.

We do not want them to grow up and have children in a country which still has not solved this problem. And we can do better. Again I say that the same rules that apply on the playing field ought to apply in life. People who work hard and play by the rules ought to be rewarded, and rewarded in proportion to their contribution, not their gender.

This is a time of enormous promise. As I always say when I urge greater action to bring economic opportunity to poor areas that have been left behind, if we can't deal with this issue now, at a time of unprecedented prosperity, when in the wide world will we ever get around to dealing with it?

I thank the Members of Congress for their commitment. I thank you for being here. I ask you to help us bear down and act, now.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:44 a.m. in Presidential Hall in the Dwight D. Eisenhower Executive Office Building. In his remarks, he referred to Sharon Long, who introduced the President; and Michelle Akers, member, 1999 Women's World Cup U.S. championship team. The President also referred to Title IX—Prohibition of Sex Discrimination, part of Public Law 92-318, the Education Amendments of 1972.

Statement on the Supreme Court Decision on Campaign Financing

January 24, 2000

The Court's opinion is a victory for democracy. The American people know that our political system needs to be fixed, and today's decision sets the stage for further reform. For years, I've challenged Congress to pass legislation that would ban the raising of unregulated soft money, address backdoor spending by outside

organizations, and strengthen public discourse. Now I am again asking Congress to restore the American people's faith in their democracy and pass real reform this year.